

N E W S R E L E A S E

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Date: May 17, 2005

News Release No.: 05-24

Older workers and employers who value them are honored by EDD's Senior Worker Advocate Office

SACRAMENTO – Four older workers and four employers who reach out to hire and retain older workers were honored today with the Governor's 2005 Older Worker and Exemplary Employer Awards by the Senior Worker Advocate Office of the state Employment Development Department.

The Governor's Excellence in Media and Lifetime Achievement Awards were also presented at an awards luncheon in the Radisson Hotel in Sacramento by Labor and Workforce Development Agency Secretary Victoria Bradshaw.

"Today we honor older workers and the enlightened employers who recognize their value in the work place," said Secretary Bradshaw. "Older workers are the hidden treasure in California's economy – productive, reliable, experienced. They perform well in their own jobs and they also share their insights with younger workers."

Nearly 45 percent of California's workers are age 40 or over, and this trend is only expected to grow. As our population continues to age, older workers will play an increasingly important role in sustaining our economy.

"California needs the skills and wisdom of older workers as we meet the challenges of international competition and ever-changing technology", said EDD Director Patrick Henning. "These awards are one way we are spreading this message to other employers: when you hire an older worker you do yourself a favor."

"In honoring older workers we recognize both their viable business skills and knowledge, but also the importance of older workers in maintaining our growing economy and in mentoring younger employees in the workplace," Lora Connolly, Acting Director of the California Department of Aging, said.

The guest speaker at the luncheon was Helen Dennis, a specialist on aging, employment, and retirement, and author of "Retirement Preparation" and "Fourteen Steps in Managing an Aging Work Force."

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The awards luncheon was supported by a coalition of organizations, including the Employment Development Department, the Department of Aging, AARP, California Chamber of Commerce, California Employer Advisory Council, Forum on Older Workers, Sacramento Employer Advisory Council and the Senior Worker Advocate Council.

To learn more about Older Workers go to the Home Page of the Employment Development Department website at www.edd.ca.gov and click on the Senior Workers link.

Governor's 2005 Older Worker Award

Ruth Steffensen, PASSAGES Adult Resource Center, Chico
Sharon K. Spangler, Danco Companies, Covina
Gary E. Murton, Sierra Conservation Center, Jamestown

Governor's 2005 Exemplary Employer Award

St. Barnabas Senior Services, Los Angeles
Poms & Associates Insurance Brokers, Calabasas
QUALCOMM, Inc., San Diego
SCAN Health Plan, Long Beach

Governor's Excellence in Media Award

CBS Early Show segment "Postponing Retirement"

Governor's Lifetime Achievement Award

Theodore Leung, Senior Nutrition Services, Sacramento

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